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ABSTRACT

This report discusses the outcomes of a South Dakota project designed to develop and validate a natural support system involving typical co-workers providing on the job training and support to individuals with disabilities. The Co-Worker Mentoring in Supported Employment (CMSE) project had the following outcomes: (1) job development activities resulted in 34 individuals with severe disabilities placed in community-based jobs; (2) 32 co-worker mentors from local businesses provided training and follow-along services to individuals served in the project; (3) CMSE and participating agency staff were instrumental in the development of transition plans which formalized job development, job placements, and follow-along responsibilities for student services in the project; (4) CMSE staff increased the number of community based vocational placements for students and adults with disabilities, the number of businesses where placements occurred, and the types of job placements; (5) CMSE staff provided training and technical assistance to co-worker mentors on an as needed basis to assist with individual participation needs; and (6) information regarding the CMSE model was disseminated. Results from the project indicate the program was effective in increasing community-based vocational placements for students and adults with disabilities. The report outlines project objectives and accomplishments. (CR)

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Co-Worker Mentoring: Facilitating Natural Supports

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Co-Worker Mentoring in Supported Employment

CFDA 84.235 C Grant # H235C40002-95

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Abstract

Black Hills Special Services Cooperative (BHSSC), the South Dakota Division of Rehabilitation Services, local school districts, and private businesses collaborated in the development of the Co-Worker Mentoring in Supported Employment (CMSE) project to address the employment needs of students with severe disabilities who reside in rural/remote communities located in western South Dakota.

The Co-Worker Mentoring in Supported Employment (CMSE) project was designed to develop and validate a natural support system involving non handicapped co-workers to provide on the job training and support individuals with disabilities.

During the three years of the project, the following accomplishments occurred:

1. Job development activities resulted in 34 individuals with severe disabilities placed in community based jobs.

2. Thirty two co-worker mentors from local businesses provided training and follow-along services to individuals served in the project.

3. CMSE and participating agency staff were instrumental in the development of transition plans which formalized job development, job placement, and follow-along responsibilities for students served in the project.

4. CMSE staff increased the number of community based vocational placements for students and adults with disabilities, the number of businesses where placements occurred, and the types of job placements.

5. CMSE project staff have provided training and technical assistance to co-worker mentors on an as needed basis to assist with individual participant needs.

6. Ongoing support in residential and community based settings are being provided to participants through the expansion of the BHSSC service capacity since being designated as an adult service provider in South Dakota.

7. Information regarding the CMSE model has been disseminated to the Northern Hills Interagency Council, the State Wide Systems Change for Supported Employment Program (Dakota Works), the State Wide Systems Change for Transition, and numerous presentations at local, state, and national conferences.

The CMSE project was demonstrated to be an effective model for service delivery resulting in an increase in community based vocational placements for students and adults with disabilities. Job development activities resulted in an increase in the quantity and quality of vocational placements for individuals with disabilities who reside in rural communities in western South Dakota. The establishment of effective business partnerships and facilitation of co-worker support was viewed positively by consumers, family members, co-workers and employers. The CMSE model has had systemic change in that policies and procedures developed through the project are now incorporated in the array of services delivered by BHSSC.

2.0 Project Narrative

Supported employment programs were developed to overcome problems associated with the lack of effective transition and vocational training services in public schools and sheltered workshops (Moon, Inge, Wehman, Brooke, & Barcus, 1990; Powell, Pancsofar, Steere, Butterworth, Itzkowits, & Rainforth, 1991; and Rusch, 1990). Several recent studies have identified potential disadvantages of traditional models of supported employment including the disruption of social relationships, limited retention rates, failure to meet individual needs of participants, and limitations associated in implementing these models in rural settings. Curl, Hall, Chisholm, & Rule (in press) reported that the outside presence of a job coach may actually disrupt normative integration between workers with and without disabilities. Gaylord-Ross, et. al., (1991) report that deficits in work-related interactions such as disrupting co-workers, contribute significantly to involuntary job termination. There are numerous reports of individuals who are placed in supported employment who lose their jobs when the job coach fades themselves from day-to-day training and assistance. Additionally, the lack of trained job coaches and staff in rural communities has significantly limited the use of some models of supported employment.

Nesbit and Hagner (1988) suggested the development of alternative support options utilizing co-workers as mentors. Advantages of utilizing co-workers in job training of individuals with disabilities include:

1. Training, conducted by co-worker mentors rather than outsiders, gives business supervisors a greater sense of control and responsibility.
2. Co-worker mentors and supported employees establish interactive relationships.
3. Co-worker mentors can share valuable workplace customs and tricks of the trade.
4. Co-worker mentors can provide ongoing support as outside supports are faded.
5. Co-worker mentors can serve as role model for appropriate work skills and behaviors.
6. Training co-worker mentors can increase the number of persons served in supported employment.

BHSSC implemented the Co-worker Mentoring in Supported Employment (CMSE) project to demonstrate the utilization of co-workers to provide ongoing support and training to individuals with severe disabilities placed in community based jobs. The CMSE project was a collaborative effort between BHSSC, South Dakota Division of Rehabilitation Services, local school districts, and private businesses. Participants in the project were referred from BHSSC, local school districts, and S.D. Division of Rehabilitation Services. Upon referral, BHSSC provided vocational assessments, transition planning with school staff when appropriate, job development, and job coaching services. During job development and job coaching services, BHSSC staff met with individual employers and explained the purpose of the CMSE project to employers and/or

co-workers. All employers indicated a willingness to participate in the project and identified potential co-workers to serve as mentors. BHSSC staff then met with co-workers and obtained their consent and cooperation to serve as mentors for individual participants. Co-worker mentors assumed additional responsibilities in working with job coaches in providing support and training to individual participants. Job coaches provided training and technical assistance to co-worker mentors as well as individual participants during the initial 30 day placement. Upon completion of the 30 day placement, on the job training and support services were provided by the co-worker mentor. Co-worker mentors were provided a small stipend ($500.00) for their participation in the project. Co-worker mentors continued to receive technical assistance from BHSSC on an as needed basis through the remainder of the project.

2.1 PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Tasks, Objectives, and Activities of the approved plan of operation for the CMSE project are provided below:

Goal 1: Develop community based work sites for 15 individuals with severe disabilities annually.

Objective 1.1 BHSSC will develop referral and intake procedures to identify individuals to be involved in the project.

Activities

1.1.1 Establish referral procedures
1.1.2 Intake of participants

Accomplishments

BHSSC project staff developed and disseminated information regarding the CMSE project to a variety of agencies including:

1. Local businesses
2. Northern Hills Interagency Council
3. State Wide Systems Change for Supported Employment project staff
4. State Wide Transition project staff
5. Directors and staff from state and local agencies including: Division of Rehabilitation, Departments of Education and Special Education, local school districts, Department of Social Services, mental health agencies, private vocational providers, and community based residential and vocational providers.

Objective 1.2 Establish and coordinate interdisciplinary, multi-agency transition teams to develop formal transition plans for participants.

Activities

1.2.1 Schedule transition meetings.
1.2.2 Conduct vocational assessments.

Accomplishments

BHSSC project staff, school district personnel, co-worker mentors, family members (when appropriate), South Dakota DRS, and business representatives have attended transition planning meetings for all project participants

Objective 1.3 Identify and expand job placement sites within community based businesses.

Activities

1.3.1 Formalize/expand placement agreements.
1.3.2 Expand community placement options

Accomplishments

BHSSC staff have coordinated job development and placement activities with South Dakota DRS representatives, South Dakota Department of Labor, private businesses, and Northern Hills Economic Development. The nature and scope of placements is provided below in Project Impact.

Objective 1.4 Provide ongoing support services

Activities

1.4.1 Conduct observations to determine adequacy of job performance

Accomplishments

Data collection procedures were developed to conduct situational assessments for individuals placed, and solicit feedback from participants, employers, co-worker mentors, and family members regarding job placement and performance. A systematic data collection procedure was implemented which measured student and staff performance on the job for up to 180 days. Both qualitative and quantitative measures were developed, See Appendix A. Questionnaires.

Goal 2. Identify, match, train, and motivate co-worker mentors for each individual placed into community work sites.

Objective 2.1 Select and match co-worker mentors within community businesses.

Activities

2.1 Identify Co-worker mentors.

Accomplishments

BHSSC was successful in identifying 32 co-workers who served as mentors in the project, a complete description is provided in section 3.0 Program Methods.

Objective 2.2 Provide co-worker mentoring training.

Activities

2.2.1 Provide project staff training in co-worker mentoring.
2.2.2 Training of co-worker mentors.

Accomplishments

BHSSC staff provide individualized training, technical assistance, and follow along support to co-worker mentors and participants served in the project.

Objective 2.3 Monitor the implementation of co-worker mentoring model.

Activities

2.3.1 Data Collection.
2.3.2 Follow-up assistance to co-worker mentors
2.3.3 Revise and validate co-worker training materials.

Accomplishments

Data collection procedures were developed and implemented. Follow along assistance was provided to co-worker mentors, participants, and employers by BHSSC staff.

Goal 3.0 Evaluate and sustain Co-Worker mentoring in supported employment demonstration project.

Objective 3.1 Conduct long-term follow-up evaluations

Activities

3.1.1 Collect performance questionnaires

3.1.2 Monitor participant's employment status

Objective 3.2 Conduct program evaluation and disseminate results

Accomplishments

Consumer, co-worker, and supervisor questionnaires were developed and implemented.

Objective 3.3 Provide ongoing support in residential and community based settings.

Activities

3.3.1 Provide training in independent living skills.

3.3.2 Accessing community resources.

Accomplishments

BHSSC staff provided training to project participants in independent living skills and accessing community resources. BHSSC utilize the "life skills coach" model which provides training and follow along services to each project participant in their home community.

Objective 3.4 Develop alternative methods for long-term support.

Activities

3.4.1 Facilitate interagency meetings

Accomplishments

BHSSC staff have held meetings with South Dakota Division of Rehabilitation Services, Behavior Management (mental health center), South Dakota Division of Social Services, and South Dakota Division of Developmental Disabilities to explore alternative funding mechanisms.

Members and agencies represented by the Northern Hills Interagency Council included:

Don Aaker
S.D. Job Service

Linda Amborn
CHN

Marcia Barnes
PAT Program

Mary Baumeister
BHSSC

Jim Bruggeman
Addiction Family Resources

Ron Carter
Open Bible Church

Claudia Dempsey
Meade School District

Carl Edwards
Northern Hills Training Center

Russ and Mary Graesser

Jane Haney
Behavior Management Systems

Lora Hawkins
Department of Social Services

Karin Haxton
CPC, BHSSC

Char Madsen-Clark
Belle Fourche School District

Darlene Hulm

Vienna Janis
BHSSC

David Jewett
Spearfish Middle School

Sandy Neyhart
Regional Interagency Facilitator

Bernie Peterson
Youth and Family Services - Head Start

Mike Sanders
Lead-Deadwood School District

Ida Marie Snorteland
Extension Office

Marlene Todd
Court Services

Mark Ventrella
Behavior Management Systems

Susan Walsh
Dept. of Social Services

Judee Wilson
Newell School District

Ed Yeager
Lead-Deadwood School District

3.0 PROGRAM METHODS

The purpose of BHSSC's CMSE project was to develop and facilitate natural support mechanisms which foster job retention for individuals with severe disabilities. Project participants received vocational assessments, employability training, job development, and job coaching services as needed during the project to ensure successful employment outcomes.

3.1 Co-Worker Mentors

During the course of the project, a total of 32 co-worker mentors participated in the project, with 2 mentors serving 2 participants during the 3 years. Eight co-worker mentors were male and 24 co-workers were female. The mean age of co-worker mentors was 39.4 years of age (range 17 to 58 years of age) with 28 co-worker mentors being parents. The mean length of employment in their current job was 4.7 years (range from .2 to 25 years of experience). Co-worker mentors had various educational background, ranging from completion of 7th grade to completion of Business School. Co-worker mentors had various job titles and positions, from working in production capacities to being the manager of the business. Individual demographic descriptors are provided in Table 1.0.

Table 1.0 Demographic Information for Co-Worker Mentors (N=32)

Co-Wkr	Age	Sex	Parent	Job Title	Length of Employment	Hrs/wk	Educational Background
A.M.	55	F	Y	Seamstress	5.0	40	some college
B.K.	35	F	Y	Morning Cook	.6	30	H.S., some college
C.S.	43	F	Y	Production Worker	7.5	40	Voc. Tech.
C.J.	52	F	Y	Seamstress	3.75	40	High School
F.S.	42	F	Y	Cashier	.8	40	Voc. Tech.
G.T.	32	F	Y	Packager	1.5	40	10th Grade
G.A.	25	M	N	Backroom Supplier	1.0	40	High School
H.J.	28	F	Y	Crew	.25	35	High School, V.T.
H.L.	31	F	N	Seamstress	4.0	40	11th grade
J.J.	38	F	Y	Supervisor	4.0	40	H.S., some college
J.B.	58	F	Y	Line Supervisor	8.0	40	High School
K.R.	55	F	Y	Seamstress	11.0	40	High School
K.V.	56	F	Y	Line Supervisor	6.0	40	High School
K.B.	52	F	Y	Manager	5.0	40	3 yrs college
K.J.	43	F	Y	Clicker Operator	7.0	40	1 yr college
L.J.	24	M	N	Cook	.5	40	High School
L.R.	22	F	N	Crew Leader	1.0	40	2.5 yrs college
M.M.	35	M	Y	Management	22.0	40	High School
M.B.	34	M	Y	Service Manager	12.0	50	Voc. Tech.
M.R.	38	F	Y	Waitress	1.0	12	2 yrs college
M.D.	42	F	Y	M.S.T.	9.5	37	High School
N.M.	44	M	Y	Baker	6.0	40	High School
O.C.	54	M	Y	Owner	25.0	50	Business School
P.K.	34	F	Y	Production Wkr.	5.0	40	GED, 1 yr college
P.C.	40	F	Y	Counter	1.0	15	pt. time college

Table 1.0 Demographic Information for Co-Worker Mentors (N=32), cont.

R.R.	17	F	N	Production Wkr.	1.0	20	12th grade
S.E.	18	M	N	Upholsterer	.6	30	GED
T.L.	38	F	Y	Utility Flow	1.3	40	1 yr college
W.B.	48	F	Y	Packer	1.2	40	7th grade
W.L.	31	F	Y	Shipping Mgr.	3.0	40	College Graduate
W.E.	44	M	Y	Executive Chef	.6	60	2 yrs. college
W.M.	45	F	Y	Deli Mgr.	2.0	40	High School

3.2 Recruitment of Co-worker Mentors. CMSE staff approached businesses through job development activities of BHSSC. After a business was identified with a potential job placement, CMSE staff met with business managers to provide an overview of the CMSE project and asked the business managers to identify co-worker mentors. Co-worker mentors were then contacted, received information regarding the project, and upon consent to participate in the project, then completed a Co-worker Mentor questionnaire. The immediate supervisor of the co-worker mentor was then asked to complete an assessment of attributes of the co-worker mentor, which was similar to the Co-Worker Questionnaire. The questionnaires included attributes that were rated on a 5 point scale, with 1 = Strongly Disagree and 5 = Strongly Agree. In general, there was agreement between the employer and co-worker in rating of attributes, with the co-worker mentor being rated as a very positive role model as an employee. The employer rated co-worker mentors higher on the following traits than self report of co-workers: being a patient person, getting along well with young adults, accepting criticism, being a good supervisor, and having valued work skills. Co-worker mentors rated themselves higher on the following traits: motivation, being a hard worker, and cooperating well with others. The mean responses on the questionnaires is provided in Table 2.

Table 2.0 Mean Responses of Employer and Co-Worker Mentor Questionnaire

Employer Selection of CoWorker	MEAN
1. He/She is a patient person	4.5
2. He/she gets along well with young adults.	4.5
3. He/she is a motivated employee	4.5
4. He/she works hard at his/her job.	4.6
5. He/she is punctual at work	4.8
6. He/she has good attendance at work	4.8
7. He/she accepts criticism well	4.3
8. He/she is dependable	4.9
9. He/she cooperates well with others	4.4
10. He/she is a good supervisor	4.3
11. His/her work skills are valued	4.8

Table 2.0 Mean Responses of Employer and Co-Worker Mentor Questionnaire

Co Wkr Mentor Questionnaire	MEAN
1. I am a patient person.	4.2
2. I get along well with young adults.	4.4
3. I am a motivated employee.	4.6
4. I work hard at my job.	4.7
5. I am punctual at work.	4.7
6. I have good attendance at work	4.9
7. I accept criticism of my work well.	4.2
8. I am dependable.	4.9
9. I cooperate well with others.	4.7
10. I am a good supervisor.	4.2
11. My work skills are valued.	4.5

3.3. Number and Type of Individuals Served:

A total of 34 individuals were placed into competitive employment during the course of the project. The average age of individual was 20.3 years, range 14 to 41 years of age. The gender distribution included 17 females and 17 males. Ethnicity included 32 participants of Caucasian descent, 1 participant of Hispanic descent, and 1 participant of Native descent. The most common disability represented was mental retardation. The mean IQ of 30 participants was 59.5 (range 38 - 78) with 4 participants having average intellectual ability. Demographic information regarding each participant is provided in Table 3.

Table 3.0 Demographic Information for Participants served (N=34)

Initials	Age	Sex	IQ	Primary Disability	Secondary Disability
A.T.	20	F	71	Mental Retardation	
A.A.	30	F	66	Mental Retardation	Mental Illness
B.P.	22	M	32	Mental Retardation	Cerebral giganticism and Kyphosis
E.M.	20	M	41	Mental Retardation	Cerebral Palsy
E.G.	41	M	Avg.	Mental Illness	
F.J.	21	M	75	Mental Retardation	
F.R.	19	F	49	Mental Retardation	Epilepsy
G.K.	16	F	45	Mental Retardation	
H.A.	17	F	65	Mental Retardation	
H.M.	16	F	43	Mental Retardation	
H.M.	18	M	57	Mental Retardation	
I.B.	19	M	78	Emotional/Behavior Dis.	
J.A.	17	F	40	Mental Retardation	Hearing Impairment
K.B.	18	F	70	Mental Retardation	
L.C.	20	F	60	Mental Retardation	
M.J.	39	M	65	Mental Retardation	
M.G.	19	M	71	Mental Retardation	

Table 3.0 Demographic Information for Participants served (N=34)

P.R.	16	M	64	Mental Retardation	ADD, Learning Disability
P.E.	20	M	49	Mental Retardation	Speech/Language
R.C.	18	F	40	Mental Retardation	Albright's Osteodystrophy
R.M.	28	M	70	Mental Retardation	
R.K.	20	F	78	Mental Retardation	Mental Illness
R.D.	22	F	63	Mental Retardation	Mental Illness
R.K.	19	F	47	Mental Retardation	
S.C.	21	F	49	Mental Retardation	
S.J.	20	F	74	Mental Retardation	Emotional/Behavior Dis., ADD
S.W.	19	M	Avg.	Learning Dis.	
T.C.	19	M	48	Mental Retardation	Medical Limitation
T.V.	14	M	65	Mental Retardation	
W.R.	16	M	Avg.	Emotional/Behavior Dis.	
W.M.	17	F	73	Mental Retardation	Mental Illness
W.H.	18	M	78	Learning Disability	
W.A.	18	F	53	Mental Retardation	

Participants were from 10 different communities in western South Dakota including: 8 participants from Belle Fourche, 1 participant from Box Elder, 2 participants from Deadwood, 2 participants from Hot Springs, 1 participant from Lead, 1 participant from Piedmont, 7 participants from Rapid City, 5 participants from Spearfish, 5 participants from Sturgis, and 2 participants from Whitewood.

3.4 Placement by Employer and Position Title

Participants were placed with 18 employers in 7 communities in western South Dakota. The number of placements by employer and community is shown in Table 4.0.

Table 4.0 Employer, Community, and Number of Placements

Employer	Community	Number of Placements
Alive Headwear	Belle Fourche	6
Best Western	Sturgis	1
Black Hills Harley Davidson	Rapid City	1
Burger King	Rapid City	2
Burger King	Sturgis	1
Eagle Ridge Industries	Sturgis	10
East Side Family Thrift	Rapid City	1
Golden Hills Resort	Lead	1
Lone Tree Manufacturing	Sturgis	1
Mid America Travel Plaza	Belle Fourche	1
Pizza Hut	Rapid City	3
Pizza Hut	Spearfish	1
Scheels Sports	Rapid City	1
Shopko	Rapid City	1
Sun Mart	Hot Springs	1
Valley Cafe	Spearfish	1
Wendy's	Rapid City	1
Winner's Circle	Hot Springs	1

3.5 Wage and Hour Data A total of 15 individuals were placed in jobs which were paid on a piece rate basis, wages were calculated according to existing practices of the employer in compliance with the Fair Labor Act. A total of 19 individuals were paid on and hourly wage basis, with the mean hourly wage of $4.60. The mean number of hours worked per week by participants was 20, with a range of 8 to 40 hours per week. The number of hours worked for participants who were students enrolled in the public schools was determined by their Individual Education Program (IEP) plans developed by individual transition teams. This resulted in several students working relatively few hours per week. Wage and hour data for participants is provided in Table 5.0.

Table 5.0 Employer Location, Position Title, Wage and Hour data of Job Placements

Initials	Employer	Location	Position Title	Hourly Wage	Hours Week	Completed 60 Days
A.T.	Best Western	Sturgis	House Keeper	4.75	35	Yes
A.A.	Eagle Ridge Indus.	Sturgis	Production Wkr.	p/r	30	Yes
B.P.	Eagle Ridge Indus.	Sturgis	Janitor	p/r	15	Yes
E.M.	Scheels	Rapid City	Stocker	4.75	10	Yes
E.G.	Mid America Travel	Belle Fourche	Janitor	6.25	12	Yes
F.J.	Sun Mart	Hot Springs	Prep Cook	4.65	25	Yes
F.R.	Burger King	Sturgis	Hostess	4.25	15	Yes
G.K.	Shopko	Rapid City	Receiving	4.75	12	Yes
H.A.	Eagle Ridge Indus.	Sturgis	Production Wkr.	p/r	10	Yes
H.M.	Pizza Hut	Spearfish	Prep Cook	4.25	15	Yes
H.M.	Eagle Ridge Indus.	Sturgis	Packager	p/r	35	No
I.B.	Pizza Hut	Rapid City	Dishwasher	4.75	25	Yes
J.A.	Wendy's	Rapid City	Hostess	4.25	8	Yes
K.B.	Eagle Ridge Indus.	Sturgis	Clipper	p/r	10	Yes
L.C.	Pizza Hut	Rapid City	Hostess	4.25	12	Yes
M.J.	Winner's Circle	Hot Springs	Janitor	5.15	20	Yes
M.G.	Golden Hills Resort	Lead	Dishwasher	4.75	20	Yes
P.R.	Valley Cafe	Spearfish	Dishwasher	4.25	20	No
P.E.	Pizza Hut	Rapid City	Dishwasher	4.25	20	Yes
R.C.	Alive Headwear	Belle Fourche	Production Wkr.	p/r	20	Yes
R.M.	Eagle Ridge Indus.	Sturgis	Production Wkr.	p/r	30	Yes
R.K.	Alive Headwear	Belle Fourche	Production Wkr.	p/r	20	Yes
R.D.	Eagle Ridge Indus.	Sturgis	Production Wkr.	p/r	30	Yes
R.K.	Alive Headwear	Belle Fourche	Production Wkr.	p/r	30	Yes
S.C.	Eagle Ridge Indus.	Sturgis	Production Wkr.	p/r	30	Yes
S.J.	Alive Headwear	Belle Fourche	Production Wkr.	4.25	40	Yes
S.W.	Eastside Thrift	Rapid City	Baker's Helper	5.00	20	Yes
T.C.	Eagle Ridge Indus.	Sturgis	Laborer	p/r	15	Yes
T.T.	Alive Headwear	Belle Fourche	Production Wkr.	p/r	10	Yes
V.T.	Alive Headwear	Belle Fourche	Production Wkr	p/r	8	Yes
W.R.	Lone Tree Mnf.	Sturgis	Sander	4.25	20	Yes
W.M.	Burger King	Sturgis	Fast Food	4.50	15	Yes
W.H.	B.H. Harley David.	Rapid City	Mechanic	4.25	20	Yes
W.A.	Eagle Ridge Inds.	Sturgis	Production Wkr.	p/r	10	Yes

3.6 Duration of Employment As shown in Table 5, 30 of the 34 participants maintained employment for at least 60 days following initial job placement. The number of participants and duration of employment for up to 180 days is presented in Table 6.0.

Table 6.0 Duration of Employment

Length of Employment	Number of Participants	
1 week	34	
30 days	31	
60 days	30	
180 days	27*	Includes 7 participants who are still in program.

Participants who did not complete 180 days:

Initials	Length of Employment	Reason for withdrawing from program
A.T.	1 week	Did a good job employer was very satisfied. A.T. was pregnant, chose not to work and moved in with boyfriend.
G.K.	90 days	G.K. decided to quit her job.
H.M.	1 week	H.M. quit his job and enrolled in Job Corps. program.
P.R.	1 week	P.R. decided to quit his job.
R.K.	90 days	Worked at 2 different employers, parents requested that R.K. be placed in adult provider program.
W.R.	30 days	W.R. decided to quit his job, had difficulty with attendance and motivation.
T.T.	90 days	T.T. became too close with mentor, mentor developed mental health issues and quit. T.T. quit job as a result.

3.7 Consumer Satisfaction Measures

Questionnaires evaluating the effectiveness of services provided were developed and administered to participants, co-workers, employers, and parents. The number of completed data forms for analysis was as follows:

	Consumer Satisfaction	Co worker Feedback	Employer Feedback	Parent/Guardian Feedback
Week 1	34	34	34	8
30 day	30	30	30	4
60 day	23	20	20	4
90 day	22	22	22	6
180 day	18	20	18	5

3.7.1 Participant Questionnaires

Each participant was asked to evaluate various aspects of their job utilizing a questionnaire which consisted of a rating scale and open ended questions. Participants were asked to rate the following questions on a scale of 1 to 3, with 1 indicating that they did not like and 3 indicating that they liked very much. A summary of participant responses is provided in Table 7.0

Table 7.0 Participant Satisfaction (Mean Response)

	DAYS				
	1 week	**30**	**60**	**90**	**180**
1. Your job?	2.4	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.7
2. The type of work you do?	2.7	2.7	2.4	2.6	2.7
3. The hours that you work?	2.4	2.5	2.1	2.2	2.3
4. The days of the week you work?	2.6	2.6	2.4	2.5	2.6
5. The amount of money you make?	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.6
6. The people you work with?	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.8
7. The supervisor at work?	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.8
8. The co-worker who helps you?	2.8	2.9	2.7	2.6	2.8
9. The interaction with others at work?	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.9
10. The amount of supervision you receive?	2.6	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.7

The results of the survey of participant satisfaction indicated a high degree of satisfaction with their job, their co-workers at the job, their co-worker mentor, their supervisor and supervision received, and interaction with others at work. Areas which were rated lower were the hours worked per week and subsequent wages. Summary of open ended questions revealed similar likes about job duties, interactions with co-workers, amount of supervision received, ability to ask the co-worker mentor for assistance, and the way participants were treated at work. The vast majority of participants indicated that they liked their job, the job duties, interaction with co-workers, and expressed pride about their accomplishments.

3.7.2 Co-Worker Mentor Feedback. Co-worker Mentors were asked to provide feedback regarding the types of assistance provided to project participants and the participants work behaviors. The questionnaire consisted of descriptive statements in which the Co-Worker Mentor indicated their agreement or disagreement on the following scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree. The mean responses per item by days of employment is shown in Table 8.

Table 8.0 Co-Worker Mentor Feedback (Mean Response)

	DAYS				
	1 week	30	60	90	180
1. Providing assistance took time away from job	2.3	2.4	2.4	2.2	2.2
2. Providing assistance took alot of time	2.2	2.4	2.1	2.3	2.0
3. It was easy to provide assistance	4.4	4.3	4.0	4.0	3.9
4. Providing assistance interfered with my job	2.0	2.2	2.2	2.0	2.1
5. I feel comfortable with types of assistance provided.	4.3	4.4	4.1	4.4	4.6
6. I feel comfortable in providing assistance	4.6	4.7	4.7	4.6	4.7
7. —— accepts my assistance	4.4	4.3	4.1	4.2	4.4
8. —— responds to my suggestions	4.2	4.2	3.8	4.0	4.2
9. —— cooperates with me	4.3	4.3	4.0	4.1	4.2
10. It is difficult to provide assistance	1.6	1.8	2.1	1.6	1.4
11. My assistance helped increase —— production	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.6
12. —— needs my assistance to maintain employment	3.1	3.2	3.0	3.8	3.2
13. —— gets along well with co-workers	4.4	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.6
14. Co-workers get along well with ——	4.0	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.3
15. —— is a motivated employee	3.5	3.5	3.7	3.5	3.9
16. —— works hard at the job	4.1	4.0	3.9	3.8	4.2
17. —— is punctual at work	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.3	4.4
18. —— has good attendance at work	4.5	4.6	4.8	4.5	4.4
19. —— attends to their work	4.1	4.0	4.0	3.9	4.1
20. —— is a good worker	4.2	4.0	3.8	4.0	4.2

Co-Worker mentor feedback indicated the following trends:

1. Co-worker mentors indicated that they felt comfortable with the types of assistance provided and comfortable in providing assistance to participants.

2. Co-worker mentors indicated that the type and amount of assistance provided did not interfere with their job duties, did not take an excessive amount of time, and the assistance helped increase the participants' work production, and was necessary to maintain employment.

3. Co-worker mentors indicated that the participants accepted the mentor's assistance, responded to mentor's suggestions, and cooperated with the mentor.

4. Co-worker mentors rated participants high in the areas of getting along with co-workers and job skills such as hard work, being punctual, having good attendance, and being a motivated and good worker.

3.7.3 Employer Feedback. Employers were asked to provide feedback on the participants' work behavior and the services provided by Black Hills Special Services Cooperative (BHSSC) staff. A series of statements were provided and the employer compared each participant to other employees on a 5 point scale, with 1 = Not Acceptable, 3 = Acceptable, and 5 = Very Acceptable. Similarly, employers rated the quality of services provided by BHSSC using the same scale of acceptability. The mean responses per item by days of employment is shown in Table 9.

Table 9.0 Employer Feedback (Mean Response)

	DAYS				
	1 week	30	60	90	180
Please rate -------- on the following					
1. Task Completion	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.0
2. Rate of work	3.2	2.8	3.1	3.0	3.0
3. Quality of work	3.6	3.4	3.4	3.7	3.5
4. Motivation to work	3.1	3.2	3.4	3.4	3.5
5. Punctuality	4.0	3.9	3.9	4.1	4.0
6. Attendance	4.2	4.0	4.2	4.3	4.2
7. Acceptance of supervison	3.9	3.9	3.6	3.8	3.8
8. Dependability	3.8	3.6	3.5	3.6	3.8
9. Interaction with others	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.8
10. Overall performance	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.4	3.4
Please rate BHSSC services					
11. On-the-job supervision provided	4.1	4.3	4.3	4.0	4.0
12. Services provided by the job coach	4.3	4.5	4.4	4.1	4.2
13. Frequency of services	4.3	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.0
14. Quality of services	4.4	4.6	4.4	4.5	4.6
15. Level of professionalism provided	4.4	3.7	4.7	4.7	4.6
16. Responsiveness to your needs	4.4	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.4
17. Follow-up provided	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.2	4.3
18. Overall, how satisfied are you	4.4	4.5	4.4	4.3	4.5

Results of the Employer Survey indicated the following:

1. When participants were compared to other employees, participants were rated favorably on task completion, rate of work, quality of work and motivation to work.

2. Participants were rated high in regards to their punctuality, attendance, dependability, acceptance of supervision, and interaction with other co-workers.

3. Overall job performance of participants was rated high.

4. Summary responses to open ended questions indicated that all employers valued the CMSE project and would recommend the project to other employers. The most positive benefit of the project cited by employers was seeing beneficial changes in participants as they worked on the job.

5. In regards to services provided by CMSE project staff, employers indicated high degree of satisfaction with the quality of services provided. Employers indicated that CMSE staff were responsive to employers needs and exhibited high degree of professionalism.

3.7.4 Parent Feedback. Parents were asked to provide feedback regarding their son or daughter's work placement and the services provided by Black Hills Special Services Cooperative (BHSSC) staff. A series of statements were provided and the parents were asked to indicate their

satisfaction with job placement on a 5 point scale with 1 = Very Dissatisfied, 3 = Satisfied, and 5 = Very Satisfied. Additionally, parents were asked to indicate their agreement and disagreement to statements regarding community based employment for their son or daughter. A 5 point rating scale was used with 1 = Strongly Disagree, 3 = Neutral, and 5 = Strongly Agree. The majority of participants did not have parental involvement and the number of questionnaires returned by parents was extremely low, despite repeated attempts to solicit feedback. Responses provided in Table 10. Parental Feedback represent the returns of 8 parents for week 1 and 5 parents for the remaining follow-up questionnaires.

Table 10. Parent/guardian Feedback (Mean Response)

	DAYS				
	1 week	30	60	90	180
Please rate how satisfied you are with:					
1. Hours of the day your son/daughter works	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.5	3.6
2. Days of the week your son/daughter works	5.0	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.2
3. The wages earned?	4.0	3.5	3.8	3.8	3.6
4. Team planning for community based employment	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.3	4.2
5. Transition services provided for employment	4.6	4.5	4.5	4.0	4.2
6. Supervision provided at the job site	4.5	4.0	4.5	4.7	4.2
7. The follow along services provided	4.4	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.2
8. The interaction with others at the job site	4.2	4.5	4.5	4.3	5.0
Please rate your agreement with the following:					
11. I support the development of community job placements.	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
12. Community based employment is a valuable experience	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
13. Community based employment is an appropriate goal for the agency.	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
14. The work done by ——— is important work	4.5	4.5	5.0	5.0	4.8
15. ——— is treated with respect at work	4.5	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
16. ——— receives enough supervision	5.0	4.0	3.8	4.8	4.6
17. ——— likes his/her community job	5.0	4.8	5.0	5.0	4.4
18. ——— is treated fairly at work	4.8	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
19. ——— relates well to others at work	4.5	4.2	5.0	4.3	5.0

As mentioned above, the responses of parents are based on a small sample and generalization of findings to all and/or other parents is limited. However, the results of parental survey indicated:

1. Parents were very satisfied with the job placements developed for their son or daughter, the transition planning process, supervision on the job, interaction with co-workers, and follow-along provided.

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2. The degree of satisfaction with number of hours worked and wages earned decreased for parents of participants who were employed for 180 days. This was due to parents indicating a desire for additional hours worked per week and subsequent increase in wages.

3. Parents reported that their son or daughter was treated with respect at work, received enough supervision, liked the job, was treated fairly at work, and related well to others at work.

4. The number one concern of all parents were for the safety of their son or daughter as they worked in the community. Parents did not express a concern for physical safety on the job, rather that their son or daughter may be taken advantage of while in the community.

5. The major benefits seen in participants as reported by parents included: increased self esteem, enthusiasm for going to work, more self confidence, and expressed value in contributing to family and themselves by earning a pay check.

6. Parents expressed high levels of agreement for the development of community based jobs for their son or daughter, that community based employment was a valuable experience and an appropriate goal for agencies.

4.0 DISSEMINATION AND REPLICATION

Results of the CMSE Project have been disseminated through the following activities:

Presentations:

1997 Association of Persons in Supported Employment, Florida

1997 Sharing Our Best, Beatrice NE

1997 S.D. Division of Rehabilitation Services Conference

1997 S.D. Council for Exceptional Children Conference

1997 S.D. State Special Education Directors Conference

1997 Montana Parent Information Center Presentations: Butte and Plentiwood

1996 Montana Developmental Disabilities Council: Helena

1997 S.D. Transition Conference

1996 S.D. Dakota Works, Statewide Systems Change Grant

1996 S.D. Statewide Conference on Supported Employment

1998 Transtech Project Staff, Minot N.D.

1998 Minnesota Association of Persons in Supported Employment

1998 Western Nebraska Regional Job Development Regional Conference

1998 Association of Persons in Supported Employment

Manuscripts will be prepared for submission to American Journal on Mental Deficiency, Journal of Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps, and other relevant journals.

5.0 IMPACT

The CMSE project has had major systemic impact on the service delivery system, participants, and communities. The project has demonstrated that natural support systems can be developed through collaboration with private businesses. All employers contacted indicated a willingness to participate in the project, valued the collaboration process in developing and maintaining employment, and indicated a willingness to recommend the project to other employers throughout the region.

Service Delivery System. The major impact of the CMSE project was the creation of long term supports that were maintained by employers and co-worker mentors at relatively inexpensive cost, i.e., $500.00 stipend vs $21.00 per hour job coaching fee for service. As a result, BHSSC and S.D. Division of Rehabilitation Services are investigating new funding sources to allow for the expansion of this service to other employers in the state. Additionally, BHSSC has implemented changes in job coaching and job development strategies. Prior to the CMSE project, BHSSC employed 5 job coaches and one job developer. Currently, BHSSC has restructured the Vocational Services Division to include 5 job developers and one job coach. The CMSE project has demonstrated that establishing a truly collaborative relationship with an employer, results in the new job opportunities for individuals with severe disabilities and the employer and co-workers are ameanable to providing additional training and supports to foster and maintain employment options.

Continuation of Funding. BHSSC is continuing the project by incorporating the methods and strategies into job placement packages. Currently, BHSSC is seeking funding through a variety of sources through local and state Education Agencies, the Divison of Developmental Disabilities, Department of Social Services, and Division of Rehabilitation Services.

Project Participants. The CMSE project significantly impacted participants by providing an increase in the diversity, quantity, and quality of paid integrated work opportunties. In addition, employers, co-workers, school staff, and participants engaged in a mutual education, discovery, and adventure process which enhanced the quality of life of all. Participants reported a better sense of self worth, increase in self-esteem, increased responsibility and independence; and when given new opportunities, participants increasingly focused on opportunity rather than limitation. Additionally, employers and co-worker mentors gained new appreciation and insight into the lives of individuals who previously may not have been given the opportunity to work. Clearly, all employers and co-workers expressed willingness to help and reported the most benefical aspect of the project was to see the growth in independence and responsiblity of individual participants. As mentioned earlier, all employers indicated satisfaction with the methods and outcomes achieved with the project, and would recommend the project to other employers in the region.

Families. As mentioned earlier, soliciting feedback from parents was problematic in terms of completing surveys. However, there was over whelming support for the project and outcomes achieved. All parents valued the transition process used and the need to incorporate paid community based work as appropriate curriculum for their sons and daughters. It is interesting to note that when their son or daughter was first placed into employment, parents were gratified that their son or daughter was even considered for placement. Following 6 months of employment, parents were more empowered to question the number of hours and wages earned by their son or daughter. This reflects greater expectations of the service delivery system.

6.0 MANUALS AND OTHER PRODUCTS

Appendix A contains copies of evaluation instruments that were developed during the course of the CMSE project. As mentioned earlier, manuscripts describing project methods and outcomes are currently under development .

7.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

As indicated in Sections 3.0 and 5.0, the CMSE project has demonstrated:

1. Developing collaborative relationships with employers and co-workers can serve as a model to facilitate long term on-the-job supports for individuals with severe disabilities.

2. Project participants received job coaching services for the first 30 days of employment. During that time, the job coach provided training to co-worker mentor and participant. This strategy appears to be effective in facilitating a "personal" relationship between co-worker mentor and participant. The majority of "training" provided to co-worker mentors, consisted of telling the mentor about the participant and how best to "relate" to the participant, i.e., how to talk to the participant, what to do when the the participant gets off task, how to provide corrective feedback, etc. Teaching actual job tasks to the participant was "easy", teaching work place behaviors and interactions was more difficult.

3. Employers and co-worker mentors often chose to teach specific job tasks to participants in a manner similar to all new employees, following established company policies and procedures.

4. During the first year of the project, co-worker mentors attended a 2 day training program at BHSSC. Dr. Rita Curl, Minot State University, gave a presentation and participants reviewed training materials. The results of the training indicated that it was difficult for an employer to release a co-worker mentor from their job duties to attend a two day training program. Difficulties reported by co-worker mentors were often related to general work related skills, such as "on task" behavior, following instructions, and social interactions. It was found that co-worker mentors were able to teach the necessary job skills to participants. Having a job coach available on an "as needed" basis was an effective strategy to assist co-worker mentors with individual problems as they developed. It is necessary to have efficient communication pathways between job coaches and employers and co-worker mentors.

5. Initially, it was hypothesized that providing assistance to participants would be a difficult and time consuming task that would affect the job performance of co-worker mentors. Survey data indicated that co-worker mentors were comfortable in the type and quantity of assistance they provided to participants and that it was not a time consuming task which affected co-workers job performance.

6. Seven co-worker mentors left employment during the course of the project. 2 co-worker mentors were fired, 4 quit their jobs, and 1 co-worker mentor had a job related injury. Two participants terminated their employment, one participant after 60-90 days, the other after completing 180 days of employment. Of the five participants who lost their initial mentor all completed at least 180 days of employment. Two participants are employed working without co-worker mentors, 3 are working with new mentors (managers stepped in) and one participant maintained employment for over 180 days but was recently laid off. It is important to note that co-worker mentors leave job sites. However, other co-workers "stepped in" to help participants maintain employment. Initial co-worker mentoring most likely facilitated interactions with other co-workers and allowed participants to demonstrate their abilities on the job, which allowed participants to continue in their employment.